

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.

(g) In terms of the agreement with the owning Company, the question of purchase of these lines by the Government is reviewed every ten years. Last such review was undertaken in 1996 when it was decided not to exercise the purchase option but to continue the existing arrangement, on financial considerations, as taking over of these lines would have entailed a heavy capital investment on upgradation and proper integration of these unremunerative lines with the main Indian Railways system.

Theft of Coal from Wagons

2912. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details regarding theft of coal from wagons during the last two years, quality, quantity, year and zone-wise;

(b) the details of investigations; and

(c) the action taken thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Details of theft of coal from Railway wagons during the last two financial years i.e. 1998-99 & 1999-2000 (zone-wise) alongwith the quantity and value thereof is as under—

Railways	Year	No. of cases	Value of coal (In Rs.)	Quantity of coal (InKgs.)
Central	1998-99	46	34950	23700
	1999-2000	53	22741	4763
Eastern	1998-99	88	120903	120879
	1999-2000	39	67730	55300
Northern	1998-99	6	24406	21806
	1999-2000	9	89130	69790
N.E.	1998-99	2	500	250
	1999-2000	1	300	140

Railways	Year	No. of cases	Value of coal (In Rs.)	Quantity of coal (InKgs.)
N.F.	1998-99	—	—	—
	1999-2000	—	—	—
Southern	1998-99	—	—	—
	1999-2000	—	—	—
S.C.	1998-99	40	113585	77945
	1999-2000	27	49555	14864
S.E.	1998-99	18	39970	44325
	1999-2000	12	18585	12970
Western	1998-99	85	15250	4815
	1999-2000	54	12095	3145
Total	1998-99	285	349564	293774
	1999-2000	195	260136	160972

(b) and (c) All cases of theft of coal are registered and investigated by Railway Protection Force under the provision of the Railway Property (Unlawful Possession) Act, 1966. Offenders are prosecuted in the Court of Law. As and when any instance of involvement of Railway employees comes to notice, suitable action is taken against them in the Court of Law, apart from Departmental disciplinary action.

Involvement of Private Sector in Gauge Conversion

2913. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are involving private sector in the gauge conversion,

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) in how many States this was executed and/or is likely to be executed, giving State-wise, zone-wise details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE FN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) to (c) In view of resource constraints, and in order to involve the stake-holders in the development and implementation of Railway